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The Wedding of Rama and Sita (*from a Balinese painting*)

THE FAMILY

539
581 "AFTER THE WORLD, the mountains, and the cardinal directions were created, and there were trees, fruits, and flowers, the gods made four human beings out of red earth, whom they provided with utensils to work with and houses to live in. Batara Siwa, the Supreme Lord, next made four mature girls for wives of the four men. The god of love, Batara Semara, made mating a pleasure so that the women would be fertilized, and eventually the four couples had many children: 117 boys and 118 girls, who

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grew, became adolescent, married, and had children. But there remained a girl without a husband. Broken-hearted, she went into the forest and there found the stump of a jackfruit tree (*nangka*) which Siwa had carved, to amuse himself, into the likeness of a human being. The girl made love to the wooden figure and became pregnant. Out of pity for her, Semara gave life to the figure so that she also could have a husband, and the couple became the ancestors of the *ngatewél* clan," whose totem is the *nangka* tree.[1]

Another legend tells us that " the gods concentrated to make human beings and produced two couples; one yellow in color: Ketok Pita and Djenar; another red: Abang and Barak. From the yellow couple was born a boy, Nyoh Gading, ' Yellow Coconut,' and a girl named Kuning. The second couple had also two children, a boy named Tanah Barak, ' Red Earth,' and a girl Lewék. Yellow Coconut married Lewék; Red Earth married Kuning; and their descendants did the same until the population of Bali was created." [2]

There are endless tales like these relating the origin of the Balinese to magic or ordinary unions of the eternal male and female principles, elements of great importance in the religion around which their life revolves. Their supreme deity is Siwa, the esoteric combination of all the gods and all the forces of nature, he who is the hermaphrodite (*wandú*) in the sense that within him are the male and female creative forces, the complete, perfect unity. Men and women must imitate their gods to attain some of that divine " completeness " by uniting to form families that worship common ancestors in the family shrine of each Balinese household. The various families that compose a village all worship in turn a common ancestor, the village god represented by the " Navel," the *puséh*, the temple of common origin. Family ties are consequently the most important factor in Balinese life; a continuous sequence that relates the individual to his

[1] The author's free translation from the *Tjatur Yoga*.
[2] Korn: *Het Adatrecht van Bali*.

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family, to his community, and to the total of the Balinese people in a relationship that represents race and nationality to them. A woman who marries a Chinese, a Mohammedan, or a European automatically ceases to be a Balinese.

A Balinese feels that his most important duty is to marry as soon as he comes of age and to raise a family to perpetuate his line. A bachelor is in Bali an abnormal, incomplete being devoid of all social significance since only settled married men can become members of the village association. Even *pedandas*, the high priests, do not conform to the ascetic abstention favoured by orthodox Hindus and invariably marry.

Thus every Balinese centres all his hopes in having children, preferably male children, who will look after him in his old age, and, most important of all, sons who will take the proper care of his remains after he is dead, performing the necessary rites to liberate his soul for reincarnation, so it will not become an aimless wandering ghost. From paintings and temple reliefs, they are familiar with the fate that awaits the childless in Hades, the *swarga*, where a woman who dies without children is condemned to carry a gigantic worm suckling at her useless breasts. A man who does not obtain children from his wife has the right to divorce her and get back the money he paid for her; or if she dies or runs away, he remarries as soon as possible. Often the sterile wife will herself suggest and even provide for a second wife for her husband. There are, however, many childless couples that because of personal attachment or for economic reasons remain monogamous and are content to borrow or rather be given a child by a neighbour or a relative to bring up as their own.

CHILDBIRTH

To follow the development of their sexual life we shall begin the cycle of birth, childhood, adolescence, marriage, and birth again, with the event of pregnancy, a great blessing to every Balinese household.

Most people we talked to had a quite correct idea of the physi-

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perform in the systematic village magic: the care of divine heir- 184
looms too dangerous for less pure people to handle. Conse- 882
quently, in the strict communities of the Bali Aga, sexual licence 836
on the part of a boy or girl is a crime against the village magic [684]
and is proportionately punished.

This is not the case, however, among the ordinary Balinese 836
villages, where boys and girls lead a freer sexual life. There mat-
ters of sex are not solemn, mysterious prohibitions, and it is nat-
ural that in coming of age they should continue to have sexual
relations that started in the character of play, incompletely of
course, during childhood.

The average Balinese does not attach great importance to [587]
virginity and it is not difficult for a divorcee, a widow, or even
a woman who has committed adultery to marry again. Low-
caste girls have many occasions to meet boys and often carry on
affairs, kept secret because of natural shyness. The Balinese are 584
extremely discreet in their intimate relations; lovers are never 834
seen together in public, and it would be unpardonable manners
for a man to make insinuations to a girl in public. It is not un- [832]
usual for girls to take the lead and " make eyes " (*saling sulang*)
at boys, or give encouragement to a shy suitor with some sort of
small present.

Girls of high caste are usually chaperoned and their chances of 564
meeting boys are considerably fewer. For the princes, whose 584
mentality is more " Oriental " than that of the less prejudiced [581]
average Balinese, a virgin (*gentan*, in the absolute sense of the
word) is highly desirable. Where feudalism still holds sway, a
prince may order a subject of his to reserve his pretty daughter
for him when she comes of age, and there are cases of Satrias and
Brahmanas who kidnapped a girl of their own caste immediately
after the first menstruation. Such cases are shocking to most
Balinese, however, and there are rules and penalties against pre-
mature marriages. In general, the average marriageable age is [582]
eighteen for boys and sixteen for girls. A noble Balinese friend 826
once told me that he could tell a virgin at first sight from the

4:Belo E-5 (1931-1939) 1949 OF7 Bali OF7

represent the firm. For the temple, certain offerings are customarily prepared by men, others by women. But the work is shared out according to households; and if during the preparatory days the man is busy working in the rice fields, his wife may represent his household at the temple, or if she is busy at home, he may go in her stead. All the working of the village life is built up out of these household units, and it is for this reason almost unthinkable to remain unmarried. Bachelors and old maids are practically unknown.

When a child is born no special point is made as to whether it is a male or a female. It is like a little god, newly come from the heaven of the gods, perhaps an ancestor returned to earth. At three months it is taken for the first time to the temple to make its obeisance at the shrine of the Recorder of Births. From this time until the time of its losing its first teeth (*meketoes*), the child has a status of maximum innocence and purity; it is the nearest thing to a god which man may know. It is made much of and adored by both parents, whether it be male or female. After the age of six, the difference in occupation begins to effect a certain typing according to sex which was not evident up to that time. Little boys do herding of ducks and cattle in the fields, while little girls carry water and help their mothers in the household tasks.

When they begin to wear clothes, the *kamben* worn by boys and girls is almost identical, and, even among adult men and women, the difference between men's dress and women's dress is only a slight difference in the tying of the cloth or in the length to which it falls below the knee. Up until the last generation both men and women had long hair, and even today most priests still wear their hair long. In physical type, too, there is little difference between males and females. Both are slender and have relatively wide shoulders and narrow hips, a strong straight back, erect carriage, smooth muscles, and a smooth skin practically without body hair. The men have no beard, and their features do not differ markedly from the women's. It is not at all unusual to mistake a man for a woman, or a woman for a man, even at a few paces' distance.

This merging and indeterminacy of the sexes is to some extent offset by certain rules of behavior. For example, a man sits crosslegged, while a woman sits with both legs to one side. Or a man climbs coconut trees, a woman weaves. Thus, if it is impossible to tell whether a figure is male or female by looking at it, one may be able to tell by the way it is sitting or by what it is doing. And when we find, as we occasionally do, individuals who wish to be of the opposite sex, it is precisely by doing such things as climbing coconut trees or weaving that they express this wish.

12: Haar S-4 (1939) 1948 OBl Indonesia OBl
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tea service that might be used for commoners, although among the moderns such nicety is disappearing.

In Bali, the noble caste, which constitutes eight percent of the population, must be regarded as a social group living entirely outside the desa organization. But in such places as South Celebes, where the royal organization has developed out of the folk community and where royalty continues to intermarry within the families of community chiefs, the difference between royalty and non-royalty is more a difference of degree than of kind.

Appended to the princely hierarchy throughout Indonesia are the administrative officials, who transmit the royal edicts and collect and transmit taxes. The higher ranking officials are found in the capital, the lower in the country. Country officials tend sooner or later to take on the characteristic of peoples' chiefs, losing their exclusively royal identity in the process. The prince compensates his officials by granting the royal income from a definite region to each of them.

The royal circle has its own body of custom and law: its own court language, its unique cultivation of literature, drama, dance and music, its specialized arts of metal-working, wood and leather carving, and its separate life at the capital. The social organization of this royal body has been too little investigated and is but slightly known.

There is a structural organization and hierarchy in which the superiors are concerned in the legal life of subordinate officials. They enter into matters of death, marriage, land transactions, money loans, etc. In part, right to land in the capital city are official rights to residential compounds. But these rights tend to develop in the direction of native ownership.[25] Other land rights are temporary rights of aliens, as the kampong of foreign traders. Residents gradually acquire independent negotiable rights to parcels of residential compounds, in the same way as in the interior of Java, parcels of the large princely residential compounds have occasionally been given away and have come in native ownership into the hands of others.

The prince is the supreme judge. He hands down legal decisions through his law courts. These decisions are part of his princely power. When they arise from controversies between his subjects, which could not be settled in the small communities, they merge with adat rights and influence the adat law of the communities.

[25] [I.e., individual possession under group ownership.]

12: Haar S-4 (1939) 1948 OBI Indonesia OBI
Redjang-Lampong ODI2. Bali OF7
Mentawei ODQ Timor OF20

Saparua, then a matrilineal system would in time necessarily result. If the bride-price marriages and adoptive marriages are equally common, as among the Rejang (see p. 52), then the recognized kinship groups are descended either from a common ancestor or a common ancestress. Descent will be reckoned either patrilineally or matrilineally, depending on the form of marriage of the parents. This would not be either a bilateral, or a double unilateral, system. Nor can it be called either a patrilineal, or a matrilineal, system, since this would arbitrarily emphasize one system over the other, when both are equally frequent (although it is true among the Rejang that there are symptoms which point to a patrilineal preponderance). What we do have is unilaterally defined groups of relatives (suku) existing alongside of each other. The line of descent shifts constantly from the paternal side to the maternal, depending on the form of marriage. Therefore, it should be known as an alternating unilateral kinship system. Such alternating systems seem to exist here and there in the Great East, and associated with them is the practice of transfer of children from the mother's sub-clan to that of the father.

A unilateral kinship system may have a certain amount of parental interweaving, if, as in Bali, exogamy is not known, or, if it falls into desuetude, as among the Mentawei, or when marriage within the sub-clan is permitted in order to avoid high expenses, as in Central Timor. It may also result from a third kind of marriage (in Rejang, semendo rajo rajo; and in Pasemah, tambiq anaq jurai duwa negory duwa) through which a child is placed in an identical relation to the kinship groups of the father and mother. In the case of the matriarchal Semendoëans and Rebangan of South Sumatra, the oldest child marries in such a way as to maintain the matriarchate (tungu tubang) along with the core of the extended family property or small family property. But for the other children, who marry in accordance with the "semendo anaq tengah" marriage form, the system is bilateral.

A general characteristic of Indonesian kinship systems is the so-called classificatory evaluation of relatives. The entire generation of a child's parents occupies a status similar to that of mother and father with respect to the child. Difference in generation, therefore, results in the prohibition of marriage.